

SHRINE PRESERVATION PARTNERS, LLC

December 10, 2014

Councilwoman Mary Beth Susman, Chair  
Neighborhoods and Planning Committee  
Denver City Council  
1437 Bannock Street, Room 451  
Denver, CO. 80202

Re: Official Map Amendment Application #2014-00041/4625 W 50<sup>th</sup> Ave and 5030 Vrain Street

Dear Madame Chair and Members of the Committee:

As the applicant, we are writing to urge your support for the referenced PUD-G11 at your committee meeting today.

Last Wednesday, on the recommendation of the City planning staff the Denver Planning Board voted unanimously to approve PUD-G11. This unanimous vote followed two lengthy hearings conducted by the Planning Board and our commitment to additional concessions requested by the neighbors including, importantly, preservation of the historic El Jebel Shrine building.

This proposed rezoning has been thoroughly vetted and meets all of the base criteria for rezoning in Denver: it is consistent with Blueprint Denver and the Denver Comprehensive Plan; it furthers public health, safety and welfare; it has special circumstances – island parcel surrounded on three sides by Willis Case Golf Course and the deteriorating El Jebel Shrine building – which justify the rezoning; it is consistent with the neighborhood context; and it aligns with the district's purpose and intent.

We have met with our neighbors and other interested residents of NW Denver continuously for more than six months. This includes hosting 3 town hall style meetings -- March 24, May 22 and September 10, 2014 -- to share our vision and solicit comments, concerns and suggestions (note that two of these meetings were prior to submitting the application for rezoning). In addition to these 3 public meetings, we have conducted 3 design charettes with interested neighbors. Prior to submitting our application, we also convened 3 concept meetings with City staff. And importantly, we met with or spoke to individual neighbors more than 50 times in the past 10 months including visits in their homes to solicit their input. More recently, at the request of the Planning Board we met with neighbors again on two occasions (November 21 and 25, 2014) to resolve design guideline and Shrine preservation language. We have exceeded all expectations of an applicant to communicate and solicit input from our neighbors.

The results of this outreach and discussion are self-evident: We have listened, interacted and modified the zoning in this PUD to respond to the concerns and requests of our neighbors. Our neighbors matter and you will hear from many of them -- including those who live across the

street from and directly facing this development project and who will experience the largest impacts -- that they support the PUD as recommended by the Planning Board and the City staff. The majority of our neighbors have agreed that additional density is acceptable and necessary in order to preserve the iconic El Jebel Shrine building.

As the applicant, we have made substantial concessions to make sure this development will blend seamlessly with existing homes and neighborhoods. We have agreed to changes in building heights, setbacks, number of stories and lot coverage. In particular:

- The neighbors agreed that additional density is needed to ensure the preservation of the El Jebel Shrine building and we agreed to prescriptive language to preserve, repurpose and save this architectural treasure;
- The neighbors oppose flat roof homes and we agreed to required pitched roof product on a portion of the project and incentives to ensure this product on the balance;
- The neighbors expressed concern about traffic impacts from driveways on the front of homes, and we agreed to rear load single family and duplex homes via an alley and a private drive reducing impacts on neighborhood (Note that lot widths and setbacks are, in turn, driven by our agreement to rear load homes.
- The neighbors expressed concern about aesthetics and we agreed to fencing and landscaping requirements;
- The neighbors expressed concerns about building height and massing and we agreed to height limits and not requested any changes to bulk plane requirements;
- Some neighbors expressed concerns about ADUs/Mother In Law units for two single family home that are adjacent to their existing homes and we agreed to eliminate these ADUs;
- At the request of the neighbors, we commissioned a traffic impacts analysis, presented this to them and posted it on the project website ([www.shrinepreservationpartners.com](http://www.shrinepreservationpartners.com)).

Despite these substantial concessions, you will likely hear from a few neighbors who, on principle, continue to oppose the proposed development and are tireless in their efforts to stop this project.

The zoning changes in this PUD will ensure the proposed redevelopment blends with and compliments the existing neighborhoods in NW Denver. It is not a carbon copy of existing zoning and instead reflects the unique characteristics of this infill site that is currently asphalt parking lots and vacant land surrounded on three sides by the Denver Willis Case golf course.

Importantly, your vote to move the PUD forward will not end our interaction with our neighbors. Site Planning Development will commence after rezoning and we are committed to continuing to work with them through this process to mitigate impacts and maximize the value

to their homes and neighborhood. We are good neighbors and will remain so long after the rezoning is approved.

One additional issue that warrants comment: architectural design guidelines. We have proposed architectural design guidelines for the project and asked for and received input from our neighbors. We have committed to restrict the deed with these guidelines when the property is conveyed. Councilwoman Shepherd commended this approach to us and it is our intention to use this as a model to create an enforceable design and architectural guideline which will be administered and enforced by a metro district that we will develop as part of this redevelopment project.

We believe this PUD reflects the changes needed to ensure the best use of this important infill parcel and which will allow – better said, require – the preservation and repurposing of the El Jebel Shrine while at the same time improving and blending the property with the existing homes and neighborhood.

On behalf of the applicant Shrine Preservation Partners and our co-applicant the El Jebel Shrine Association, we thank you for your consideration and urge your support for this PUD as recommended by the City staff and approved unanimously by the Planning Board. PUD-G11 has been properly vetted, amended and submitted to you and we thank you for your support to move this to the full Council for consideration.

Sincerely,

SHRINE PRESERVATION PARTNERS, LLC

Glen Sibley  
Steve Chiles  
Dick Miller

Cc: Members, Neighborhood and Planning Committee